

ARTS & FEATURES

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PHOTO BY VIRGINIA TAYLOR

Volunteers Vanessa King, Dawn Powell and Vice President Erica Rose Paschold run the thrift store alongside current foster Boomer.

Mountain Pet Rescue makes a difference in the lives of Blue Ridge area animals

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Paws scamper across the floor as the door chimes, announcing the arrival of another happy customer at Thrift Hound.

For the hard working women behind Mountain Pet Rescue, running the thrift store and caring for its four-legged friends is just another day on the job.

“We are just a rescue organization who wanted to make a difference for the dogs and cats in our local mountain communities,” said Joelle Warren, president and a co-founder of Mountain Pet Rescue Asheville,

a foster-based organization that helps rehome animals within Asheville and the surrounding counties. “We just want Mountain Pet Rescue to be a spot where people love to come hang out and help animals and to provide happy, healthy pets to people who want them.”

With the need to rehome stray animals still a prevalent issue in the Blue Ridge region, Mountain Pet Rescue hopes to protect stray animals from euthanization, especially in the smaller areas.

“If you look at the smaller counties like Madison County or Rutherford County, those counties are less funded and more rural. There are still plenty of cit-

izens in those counties who don’t spay and neuter or just let their animals run free and they end up in the shelter system,” Warren said. “We just want to be one of those rescues that help them get the dogs out, because they can only spend so much time at smaller county facilities before euthanasia is inevitable. That’s where we wanted to make a difference.”

Contrary to other rescue organizations in the area that have turned their focus more toward farm animals, Mountain Pet Rescue hopes to target pets and future pet owners through their work.

Erica Rose Paschold, the vice president and a co-founder of Mountain Pet Rescue, said that it was from

this need that Mountain Pet Rescue was born.

“When I was ready to get back involved with animal rescue, Brother Wolf had kind of gone in a different direction with their sanctuary,” Paschold said. “We just got like thirty people together that are involved in animal rescue around here and just talked about the future of animal rescue and then Mountain Pet Rescue was born!”

Joelle Warren was no stranger to starting a grassroots pet rescue organization. Following her graduation from UNC Asheville and a few years volunteering for Animal Compassion Network, Warren founded and

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